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Sixty-eighth year

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Tuesday, 16 July 2013, 3.15 p.m.

New York

President:	Mrs. DiCarlo	(United States of America)
Members:	Argentina	Mr. Rutilo
	Australia	Mr. Quinlan
	Azerbaijan	Mr. Musayev
	China	Ms. Jiang Hua
	France	Mr. Bertoux
	Guatemala	Mr. Rosenthal
	Luxembourg	Ms. Lucas
	Morocco	Mr. Loulichki
	Pakistan	Mr. Munir
	Republic of Korea	Mr. Sul Kyung-hoon
	Russian Federation	Mr. Iliichev
	Rwanda	Mr. Nduhungirehe
	Togo	Mr. M'Beou
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Parham

Agenda

The situation concerning Iraq

Third report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 6 of resolution 2061 (2012) (S/2013/408)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation concerning Iraq

Third report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 6 of resolution 2061 (2012) (S/2013/408)

The President: In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of Iraq to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Mr. Martin Kobler, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq, to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2013/408, which contains the third report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 6 of resolution 2061 (2012).

I now give the floor to Mr. Kobler.

Mr. Kobler: At the outset of this meeting, please allow me to wish everyone a blessed month of Ramadan.

I am honoured to present to the Council today the third report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 6 of resolution 2061 (2012), on the activities of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI). I shall also brief Council members on the most recent developments in Iraq.

Ten years after the fall of the former regime and less than two years after the withdrawal of United States forces, Iraq's transition toward democracy and prosperity is in a crucial phase. The country can continue to make important strides in deepening the roots of democracy, pursuing reform, embracing diversity and improving its stature in the international community; or Iraq can go down a dangerous path, potholed with political impasse and sectarian violence at each turn, leading to increased instability. The Iraqi people and their leaders now face a set of critical decisions, the outcome of which will leave a lasting impact on their future.

I am deeply concerned by the recent events in Iraq. I regret to report that the past four months have been among Iraq's bloodiest in the past five years. Nearly 3,000 men, women and children have been killed, and over 7,000 more injured. The perpetrators of that violence are taking advantage of two leading factors of instability in the country. Those include the ongoing political stalemate and the Syrian crisis.

Almost seven months after the first protests broke out in Ramadi, demonstrators are still holding sit-ins on international highways and public squares throughout Iraq's western governorates. They claim that the Government has yet to fulfil their demands. In turn, the Government indicates that it has persisted in its efforts to meet those demands. For instance, the Government announced that it had released approximately 8,000 detainees. Similarly, the Government has reported that, as of 1 July, the committee chaired by Mr. Al-Shahristani had reinstated pensions and lifted property seizures, among other measures, that affect 300,000 citizens in a positive manner.

On the legislative side, senior government and political leaders have endeavoured to produce mutually acceptable draft laws that address the demonstrators' demands. I am pleased to report that this process has borne some fruit. In April, the Council of Ministers approved three key amendments to controversial laws, which have now been introduced for consideration in Parliament. Unfortunately, the enactment of those amendments in Parliament, along with other important legislation, is still pending.

I have continued to pursue UNAMI's mandate to promote national reconciliation. I have done so by consulting repeatedly and consistently with senior leaders, religious authorities and representatives of key parties. I have also offered my good offices. Our aim was to facilitate contacts among national actors. In that context, the Government of Iraq agreed to a UNAMI-led verification mechanism on the release of female detainees.

The United Nations has remained the only international actor to reach out to the demonstrators and their leaders in a public way. We have continued to visit them in places such as Mosul and Ramadi, and even in cities outside Iraq.

To promote a negotiated solution, UNAMI has established a set of principles that should guide any dialogue initiative. The principles affirm, first, the

the unity and integrity of Iraqi territory; secondly, the rejection of all forms of violence; thirdly, the eradication of all forms of sectarian incitement; fourthly, respect for the Constitution as the supreme law; and, fifthly, upholding all fundamental freedoms and human rights, as enshrined in the Constitution.

I therefore appeal to all leaders and representatives to end the stalemate by enacting the proposed amendments and laws. I also call upon the demonstrators to maintain the peacefulness of their protests and to engage in a sincere and constructive dialogue without further delay.

The need to resolve the demonstrator crisis is more pressing than ever. Iraqis were reminded of the risks during the early morning hours of Tuesday, 23 April. Iraqi security forces clashed with demonstrators in Kirkuk's southern town of Hawija. According to our investigations the Iraqi security forces used excessive force in the face of largely unarmed demonstrators, leading to the death of 45 people and injuring another 110, almost all of them were civilians.

Hawija unleashed a wave of deadly standoffs and attacks across Iraq. I have condemned the violence and called on the Government to launch a public, independent and transparent investigation and to bring to justice those responsible to justice.

In the aftermath of Hawija, a number of armed groups are once again active. Some are affiliated with terrorist groups such as Al-Qaieda. Others are well-known militias that are allegedly kidnapping and killing based solely on the sect of their victims.

Recent provincial council elections point to Iraq's ability to take another path towards peace and stability. On 20 April more than 6 million Iraqi voters, of which 3 million were women, went to cast their votes in 12 of Iraq's 18 provinces. I am pleased to report that the day was marked by an acceptable turnout rate, averaging more than 50 per cent on a national basis.

I am reassured by the fact that the elections that were postponed in Anbar and Ninewa were finally held on 20 June. I was heartened to see voters head to the polls despite the existence of threats of violence and attack.

As the newly elected representatives form their local Governments, I hope that this process will soon translate to tangible improvements in the lives of citizens.

Taken together, the elections on 20 April and 20 June were the first elections that Iraqis managed completely by themselves. I would like to therefore congratulate the Chairman, Commissioner and staff of the Independent High Electoral Commission for the professional manner in which they supervised, organized and conducted the elections.

I am also pleased to report that Arab-Kurdish relations, which had reached their own crossroads, are now once again on the path towards improvement. That is best characterized by the bold decisions that both leaderships have taken. Reciprocating a visit by the Kurdistan region's Prime Minister Barzani on 29 April, Prime Minister Nuri Al-Maliki went to Erbil on 9 June and held a session of the council of ministers. A few days ago, President Massoud Barzani travelled to Baghdad to meet with Prime Minister Al-Maliki, Speaker Usama Al-Nujaifi and other political leaders. Those mutual visits are an encouraging sign of leadership and statesmanship on both sides.

Seven joint Baghdad-Erbil committees are now negotiating unresolved and crucial matters, including the federal budget, the oil and gas law, disputed boundaries and security arrangements. I would like to reiterate our strong support for those efforts, as they are proof that differences can be bridged only through direct dialogue. I therefore wish to renew UNAMI's offer to assist at any stage. In particular, UNAMI's role in resolving the situation in the disputed internal boundaries is at the core of our mandate. I am afraid not much could be achieved during my tenure.

Similarly, I am encouraged by the intentions of all components in Kirkuk to hold elections there. I sponsored a number of meetings in Baghdad and Kirkuk in order to bridge differences among the components. We continue to offer our good offices in that regard.

I welcome the decision to hold the parliamentary and provincial elections in the Kurdistan region on 21 September. I urge Kurdistan region authorities to complete all preparations for conducting the elections without further delay. On 30 June, however, the Kurdistan regional Parliament decided to postpone presidential elections for two years. That is a matter of concern. Elections are the backbone of democracy. UNAMI supports regular and timely elections at all levels.

The improvement in Iraq's regional relations is best highlighted by the great strides the country has made

towards restoring the international standing it had before 1990. I would like to commend the Governments of Iraq and Kuwait on their determination to complete the boundary maintenance project in a timely manner and to form a successor bilateral technical arrangement, bringing closure to resolution 833 (1993).

By receiving the funds set aside with the United Nations for the compensation of Iraqi private citizens whose assets remained on Kuwaiti territory after the demarcation, the Government of Iraq was able to bring closure to resolution 899 (1994). UNAMI is looking forward to implementing resolution 2107 (2013), which transferred the obligations on missing Kuwaitis, third-country nationals and Kuwaiti property, including national archives, to the Mission. I similarly commend the visit of His Highness Prime Minister Al Sabah on 12 June to Baghdad, which resulted in the signing of a number of bilateral agreements in various areas. I am confident that both Governments have now ushered in a new era of cooperation.

The violence in Iraq cannot be separated from the civil war in Syria. The battlefields are merging. Iraqi armed groups have an increasingly active presence in Syria. As such, the Syrian conflict is no longer only spilling over into Iraq. Instead, it has spread to Iraq, since Iraqis are reportedly taking up arms against each other in Syria and in Iraq. That violence could easily spiral out of control if it is not speedily addressed. The Syrian conflict is having an impact on Iraq through the continued influx of refugees. As of 7 July, more than 160,000 Syrian refugees had been registered in Iraq, the majority in the Kurdistan region. A particularly urgent situation is arising at the Domiz camp in the Kurdistan region. The growing number of refugees entering the region has led to overcrowding at the camp. Domiz has a capacity of 28,000, but it is now housing some 42,000 people.

In order to respond to the Syrian crisis, Iraq's United Nations humanitarian agencies have issued the fifth Syria Regional Response Plan, amounting to $310 million, which will cover humanitarian operations until the end of this year. I call on Member States to contribute to this financial appeal and meet the humanitarian needs of the refugees. I would like to commend the Governments of Iraq and the Kurdistan region for what they have done so far for the Syrian refugees. I call on the central and Kurdish authorities to extend their generosity and hospitality by providing more resources and additional land needed for Domiz.

I would also like to draw the Council's attention to the issue of border closure with Syria, which has increasingly limited protection space for those in need. Since March 2013, however, the crossing points have been completely closed, preventing Syrians from seeking refuge in Iraq. I appeal to the Government of Iraq to reopen the border as quickly as possible.

The factors of instability I have mentioned are having a direct impact on the lives of Iraqis, especially in the area of human rights, one of grave concern for us. The worsening security situation is preventing many Iraqis from living a secure life, as anyone should. As the people of Kirkuk observed the holy month of Ramadan, dozens have been killed in cold blood as they celebrated Ramadan in crowded cafés. I strongly condemn the brutal terrorist attacks that have killed hundreds of people in the past two weeks. The legacy of that conflict is prevalent throughout society. For children, it has left one in three deprived of many basic services and fundamental rights. It is an area where grave violations continue.

Minorities have also fallen victim to targeted acts of violence, including murder and kidnapping for ransom. In the last few weeks and months there have been specific atttacks on Yezidi, Christian and black Iraqi communities. No element has been spared. On 25 June, two suicide bombers in Tuz Khormato caused casualties among members of the Turkmen minority. Among those killed were two Turkmen leaders.

At the same time, UNAMI continues to learn about abuse, mistreatment and torture in prisons, especially in facilities under the Ministry of Interior — an area that has come into greater focus because it is covered under the demonstrators' demands. On 16 April, Iraq executed 21 persons convicted under its anti-terrorism law. I am encouraged that no further executions have taken place since last April. Once again, I appeal to the Government to declare a formal moratorium on implementation of the death penalty.

I would now like to turn to the issue of Camp Ashraf and Camp Hurriya temporary transit locations. Looking back at the end of my tenure, we have come a long way. A major crisis was defused in December 2011. Since then, almost all residents of Camp Ashraf have been relocated to Camp Hurriya. Of the residents, 1,600 have been recognized by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) as persons in need of international protection, and 135 have been relocated to safe countries. Together, we have left

no stone unturned in our quest to find a humanitarian solution, made possible through persistent negotiations among all concerned.

I thank the Government of Iraq for its constructive approach and understanding. I know it is not yet satisfied with the overall success so far, but major bloodshed may be averted. I am also grateful to the residents of Camp Ashraf and Camp Hurriya and their leaders. I have always understood their feelings. It is hard for them to leave a place where they have spent most of their adult life — Camp Ashraf. I recall my many meetings with the Mojahedin-e Khalq leadership in Paris, and the more than 60 hours of negotiations needed to bring about the voluntary and peaceful relocation of all but 100 residents. Throughout the process, the world of propaganda was one side of the coin. The other was consistent, confidential and constructive talks behind the scenes. My thanks also go to the United States and the European Union for their support.

Allow me to add four brief remarks on the topic. First, our main concern is the security of Camp Hurriya residents. On 9 February and 15 June, the camp was attacked by rockets. I strongly condemn the attacks. Ten residents were tragically killed and 71 others wounded as a result. The Government is still investigating the incidents. Under the memorandum of understanding, the Government of Iraq is exclusively responsible for the security and safety of the residents. I have repeatedly reminded the Iraqi authorities at the highest levels, both in writing and orally, to fulfil the camp residents' requests for additional protective measures. Unfortunately the Government has not yet fully responded to them.

Secondly, the situation in Camp Ashraf remains tense. The remaining 100 residents are not willing to leave the camp without resolution of the property question. In the meantime, the Government has taken legal steps to evict the remaining residents and address the property question, and has requested the residents to nominate lawyers to represent them in the legal proceedings. The residents, however, have failed to do so.

Thirdly, the Governments of Albania and Germany have offered to relocate 210 and about 100 residents, respectively, to their countries. The relocation to both countries has started, and I would like to thank both Governments for their generosity in offering relocation opportunities. We are, however, still looking to relocate 90 per cent of the residents. There is no peaceful solution other than relocation to countries outside Iraq, and I appeal to all Member States to consider taking in the remaining residents. However, relocation to third countries requires the cooperation of Camp Hurriya residents with UNHCR. Since the terror attack of 9 February, Camp Hurriya residents have been boycotting interviews with UNHCR. As a result, UNHCR is readjusting its presence and will keep a reduced workforce in case the residents decide to restart the process and start cooperating, but also to allow for the possibility that additional countries will come forward with relocation offers.

Of increasing concern are the human rights abuses in Camp Hurriya itself by the camp leadership. Hundreds of daily monitoring reports suggest that the lives of Camp Hurriya residents are tightly controlled. A significant number of residents have reported to United Nations monitors that they are not free to leave the Camp, to participate in the resettlement process offered by UNHCR, to contact family members outside Iraq, or to have contact with other relatives even within the Camp itself. Some residents reported that they had been denied access to medical treatment by the residents' leaders. Others reported having been subjected to verbal and other forms of abuse for disagreeing with the resident leaders or for expressing the wish to leave the Camp.

I urge the Camp leadership to fully respect the rights of the residents, to let those residents to leave the Camp if they wish to do so, to allow their freedom of movement within the Camp without supervision, and to permit residents to have free and unimpeded access to unsupervised telephone calls, email communications and internet access. Also, the Camp leadership does not allow unsupervised conversation with United Nations monitors. Some residents have reported to United Nations monitors that they face severe consequences for attempting to contact United Nations monitors without the permission of the resident leadership. I am also disappointed that United Nations monitors are often abused. Our colleagues do not deserve to be spat at. Our commitment is a humanitarian one. I call upon Camp Hurriya residents to accept our extended hand to help them pursue a new life. I would like to renew my call for all parties to continue to be patient and to find a peaceful resolution to outstanding issues.

At the end of my tenure in Iraq, I would like to conclude with some personal observations. A striking feature about Iraq and its people is that Iraqis are

enjoying new-found freedoms despite all of the violence. I have intentionally chosen the memorial in Halabja as the destination of my first and one of my last visits outside of Baghdad as a symbol and reminder that the atrocities of dictatorship must never come back; as a symbol and reminder that the future of Iraq lies in peaceful coexistence; and as a symbol and reminder that choosing the right path now can ensure peaceful conditions for tomorrow.

Shiites, Sunnis, Kurds, Turkomans, Assyrians, Christians, Shabak, Sabean Mandaens, Yezidis and others have all experienced suffering that will not and cannot be forgotten and must never be repeated. I know most Iraqis look to the future, and away from the past. They should embrace all of their communities as part of a peaceful coexistence. To ehlp them do so, I would like to highlight four principles I deem important at the end of my tenure.

First, the Constitution should be upheld and implemented in full. The first articles of the Iraqi Constitution emphasize the need to protect the country's diversity and federalism. This is why Iraqis must return to the Constitution as the political framework for resolving all prevailing conflicts.

Secondly, Iraq's resources should be utilized efficiently and distributed equitably. Iraq is now the third largest oil exporter and the second largest oil producer of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries. The country's vast natural resources are like a trust fundamental — gold literally lying underfoot. However, Iraq needs to efficiently manage and share the revenues of its hydrocarbon resources. This is critical to Iraq's economic growth, social development and political stability. To ensure that all Iraqis benefit, I call on the central Government and the Kurdistan Regional Government to agree on the oil and gas and revenue-sharing laws without further delay.

Thirdly, the environment should be protected. Iraq lies at the centre of the sand and dust storms that are damaging the well-being of its population and its economy. Its neighbours suffer equally. As such, I welcome the launch of the United Nations Environment Programme's new regional programme to combat sand and dust storms. I would also like to welcome Prime Minister Al-Maliki's high-level initiative to set up a national commission to combat sand and dust storms in Iraq and to facilitate regional cooperation on this matter. It is imperative to reverse the environmental degradation in Iraq and the region now.

My last point is that women represent more than half of the Iraqi population, but insecurity, discrimination and other factors still reduce the opportunities Iraqi women have to rebuild their country. I call on the Government to scale up and implement a national policy on women. Peace and progress will be achieved in Iraq only if both men and women can live without the fear of violence. Deeds have to follow words.

The depth of my concern for Iraq's young people is now a familiar topic to the Council. I would like to raise the issue of their plight with more urgency than ever. I have spoken of the devastating death toll that Iraq has seen in past months. Terror and violence have a deep and troubling impact on young people. Iraq has now seen decades of conflict and fear. Yet another generation is confronted with trauma and bloodshed.

The traumatized children and young people of today are the traumatized adults of tomorrow. Insecurity is just one of the reasons they feel powerless. Young Iraqis want education and opportunities, but cannot find jobs. Young Iraqis are dynamic and political, but have no representation and no platform to raise their voices. Fear, frustration, helplessness — these feelings plague the youth of Iraq and run contrary to the spirit of hope, optimism and ambition that fuels their deep belief in their country. Young Iraqis seek a better life abroad because hope and optimism are fading. I believe that they would stay if they could just have a chance to shape their own futures in the land where they were born. Leaders need to act now to keep the promising young population in Iraq. The national youth strategy should not remain a piece of paper, but must be filled with life.

I would like to conclude with a final appeal to the Council and the international community. As upheaval and uncertainty sweep through the Middle East, it is high time that the international community and regional actors develop a vision for the whole region. The direness of the situation requires that the international community dedicate far more attention to the region as a whole, as developments are interrelated.

I wish to thank the Government of Iraq for its cooperation during 2013, as in the years before. I also wish to place on record my deep thanks to the Security Council for its continued support. But at the end of my tenure, my special thanks go to our team of the United Nations family, UNAMI and the country team, the hundreds of dedicated men and women who work in Iraq under extremely difficult circumstances, in a

violent environment. My admiration goes to each and every single one of them for their dedicated work — the support staff, air operators and engineers, cooks and cleaners, computer specialists and security personnel, without whom we cannot fulfil our political, human rights and development mandate.

I leave with a feeling of professional and human satisfaction. A great deal of ground has been covered during the past years, but a great deal still needs to be done. UNAMI's role is more important than ever. I count on my colleagues to pursue the Mission's mandate with the same level of professionalism and dedication. I wish my successor the best of luck.

I have tried to take the mandate the Council entrusted to me seriously — to advise, support and assist the people and the Government of Iraq. My last words go to the people of Iraq, to whom I wish a future of peace, prosperity and well-being.

The President: I thank Mr. Kobler for his briefing.

I now give the floor to the representative of Iraq.

Mr. Alhakim (Iraq) (*spoke in Arabic*): Allow me at the outset to extend my sincere gratitude to Mr. Martin Kobler, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq, for his tremendous efforts in helping the people and Government of Iraq as head of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI). We wish Mr. Kobler continued success in his future endeavours and express our appreciation to the entire team that worked with Mr. Kobler in Baghdad and New York.

After reviewing the report of the Secretary-General (S/2013/408) on the work of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), I would like to make the following observations. I have the honour to convey to the Council the desire of the Government of the Republic of Iraq to extend the mandate of UNAMI for another year on the basis of the relevant Security Council resolutions. The efforts of the Governments of Iraq and Kuwait have been successful in resolving outstanding issues, especially with regard to missing persons of Kuwaiti and other nationalities and locating their remains, as well as the issue of the national Kuwaiti archives, and has found a legal arrangement for the continued search for those missing and their remains in accordance with the provisions of Chapter VI of the Charter of the United Nations. The efforts of both countries and the United Nations resulted in the adoption of resolution 2107 (2013).

UNAMI has played a positive and effective role in Iraq in bringing together the various viewpoints of the Iraqi political entities and contributing to the success of the Governing Council elections in Iraq, which took place peacefully and without incident. The Government of the Republic of Iraq also hopes for UNAMI's assistance in providing the logistical means to secure a sufficient number of observers to ensure transparency in the parliamentary elections that are scheduled to be held in the first half of 2014.

In accordance with the democratic approach adopted by the Iraqi Government, elections for governorate councils were held on 20 April in 12 governorates, and on 20 June in the governorates of Ninewa and Anbar. The elections resulted in the citizens of Iraq choosing their representatives for local government in a fair and transparent manner, in accordance with international standards, in cooperation with UNAMI and under the supervision of the Independent High Electoral Commission and representatives of political blocs. The elections were successful, thus paving the way for the success of the upcoming parliamentary elections next year. This will be a further step in the democratic process drawn up by Iraqis for the peaceful transfer of power through the ballot box. As a result, newly elected governors have formed the new governorate councils.

With regard to protests by citizens in a number of Iraqi cities, the Government has affirmed that peaceful protest is a right guaranteed to all Iraqis so that they might peacefully express their views, as stipulated in the Constitution. The Government has worked assiduously from the start to meet the legitimate demands of the demonstrators, has dealt with these demands positively, in accordance with the Iraqi Constitution, and has in fact met many of these demands.

With regard to Camp Hurriya, my Government condemns the recent shelling of the camp by terrorist groups and militias, which led to several casualties and injuries. That was part of the wave of terrorism that struck the entire country. My Government reaffirms the importance of protecting camp residents and providing them with the necessary humanitarian aid and health care. The Government has provided cement structures to protect residents from any future attacks.

We welcome the decision of the Government of Albania to resettle 210 residents from the camp, and

welcome the arrival of the first group of 71 individuals in Albania. We also welcome the offer of the German Government to resettle 100 residents of the camp.

In line with the Government's intentions to further develop Iraq's human and social resources, we have joined the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and annulled our reservation on paragraph 9 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, thus entitling children born to Iraqi mothers to the right of Iraqi nationality.

In conclusion, I am pleased to convey to the Council the desire of the Government of Iraq that the mandate of the UNAMI be extended for one more year, in accordance with the provisions of resolution 1770 (2007), in letter and in spirit, and that UNAMI continue to provide assistance and advice upon prior request by the Government of Iraq.

The President: There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers. I now invite members to informal consultations to continue our discussion on the subject.

The meeting rose at 3.55 p.m.